

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 1, 4, 13, 17, 20, 23 and 29 as shown below. The claims, as pending in the subject application, now read as follows:

1. (Currently amended) An information processing apparatus capable of controlling read operation of an original image by a scanner via a scanner driver, comprising:

determination means for determining by the scanner driver whether digital watermark information is embedded as specific image data in image data read by the scanner; [[and]]

control means for controlling predetermined image processing for the read image data on the basis of a determination result by said determination means; and

storing means for storing a read processing status of the specific image data as log information.

2. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said control means processes the read image data into image data different from the read image data when said determination means determines that the read image data substantially matches the specific image data.

3. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising display means for displaying a warning message representing that the image data is processed to match the specific image data when the predetermined image processing is performed for

the read image data, wherein said control means discards the read and processed image data on the basis of an image processing request from a user in response to the warning message displayed on said display means.

4. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said control means creates log information from which a read processing status of the specific image data can be verified, and registers the log information in a nonvolatile memory ~~on the basis of the image processing request from the user in response to the warning message displayed on said display means.~~

5. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the predetermined image processing includes resolution conversion processing of converting a resolution of the read image data, color conversion processing of converting color tone of the read image data, and image conversion processing of adding arbitrary image data to the read image data.

6. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the specific image data is data of an original image whose copying operation is prohibited by law.

7. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the specific image data is stored and managed in advance so as to be updateable.

8. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the scanner can be connected via a local interface or a network interface.

9. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the digital watermark information is embedded in the specific image data at a predetermined cycle.

10. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the digital watermark information includes, as code information, information about the type of specific image data, an issue country, an issue number, and a value.

11. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the digital watermark information includes invisible or visible information.

12. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising storage means for storing image data read by the scanner, wherein said control means also processes an image stored in said storage means.

13. (Currently amended) An image processing method for an information processing apparatus capable of controlling read operation of an original image by a scanner via a scanner driver, comprising:

a determination step of determining by the scanner driver whether digital watermark information is embedded as specific image data in image data read by the scanner; and

a control step of controlling predetermined image processing for the read image data on the basis of a determination result in the determination step; and  
a storing step of storing a read processing status of the specific image data as log information.

14. (Original) The method according to claim 13, wherein the control step comprises processing the read image data into image data different from the read image data when the image data is determined in the determination step to substantially match the specific image data.

15. (Original) The method according to claim 13, further comprising a display step of displaying a warning message representing that the image data is processed to match the specific image data when the predetermined image processing is performed for the image data in the control step, wherein the control step comprises discarding the read and processed image data on the basis of an image processing request from a user in response to the warning message displayed in the display step.

16. (Original) The method according to claim 13, wherein the predetermined image processing includes resolution conversion processing of converting a resolution of the read image data, color conversion processing of converting color tone of the read image data, and image conversion processing of adding arbitrary image data to the read image data.

17. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 13, wherein the control step comprises ~~creating log information from which a read processing status of the specific image data can be verified, and~~ registering the log information in a nonvolatile memory ~~on the basis of the image processing request from the user in response to the warning message displayed in the display step.~~

18. (Original) The method according to claim 13, wherein the specific image data is data of an original image whose copying operation is prohibited by law.

19. (Original) The method according to claim 13, wherein the specific image data is stored and managed in advance so as to be updateable.

20. (Currently amended) A computer-readable storage medium which stores a program for causing an information processing apparatus capable of controlling read operation of an original image by a scanner via a scanner driver, to execute

a determination step of determining by the scanner driver whether digital watermark information is embedded as specific image data in image data read by the scanner, [[and]]

a control step of controlling predetermined image processing for the read image data on the basis of a determination result in the determination step; and

a storing step of storing a read processing status of the specific image data as log information.

21. (Original) The medium according to claim 20, wherein the control step comprises processing the read image data into image data different from the read image data when the image data is determined in the determination step to substantially match the specific image data.

22. (Original) The medium according to claim 20, wherein the computer-readable storage medium records a program for causing the information processing apparatus to execute the display step of displaying a warning message representing that the image data is processed to match the specific image data when the predetermined image processing is performed for the image data in the control step, and

the control step comprises discarding the read and processed image data on the basis of an image processing request from a user in response to the warning message displayed in the display step.

23. (Currently amended) The medium according to claim 22, wherein the control step comprises ~~creating log information from which a read processing status of the specific image data can be verified, and~~ registering the log information in a nonvolatile memory ~~on the basis of the image processing request from the user with respect to the warning message displayed in the display step.~~

24. (Original) The medium according to claim 20, wherein the predetermined image processing includes resolution conversion processing of converting a

resolution of the read image data, color conversion processing of converting color tone of the read image data, and image conversion processing of adding arbitrary image data to the read image data.

25. (Original) An information processing apparatus capable of controlling read operation of an original image by a scanner via a scanner driver, comprising:

information extraction means for extracting, by the scanner driver, digital watermark information embedded in image data read by the scanner; and

image processing means for processing the image data on the basis of an extraction result from said information extraction means.

26. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 25, further comprising selection means for causing a user to select whether to process the image data by said image processing means.

27. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 26, wherein said selection means displays whether to process the image data on display means, thereby causing the user to select whether to process the image data.

28. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 25, wherein said image processing means overlays the information extracted by said information extraction means on the image data.

29. (Currently amended) A processing method for an information processing apparatus capable of controlling read operation of an original image by a scanner via a scanner driver, comprising:

- an information extraction step of extracting, by the scanner driver, digital watermark information embedded as specific image data in image data read by the scanner; [[and]]
- an image processing step of processing the image data on the basis, of an extraction result in the information extraction step; and
- a storing step of storing a read processing status of the specific image data as log information.

30. (Currently amended) A computer-readable storage medium which stores a program for causing an information processing apparatus capable of controlling read operation of an original image by a scanner via a scanner driver, to execute

- an information extraction step of extracting, by the scanner driver, digital watermark information embedded in image data read by the scanner; [[and]]
- an image processing step of processing the input image data on the basis of an extraction result; and
- a storing step of storing a read processing status of the specific image data as log information.